SPECIAL EDITION

The MONITOR

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The Matanuska-Susitna College Student Newspaper

HAPPY VALENTINES!!

I know what you're probably thinking. "Another one?" And you guys are probably saying "Another one? And for Valentines of all holidays." Valentines is one of the most dreaded holiday for guys. Women love it. And why not. Just one more day in the year that they get gifts and, hopefully, guaranteed attention. I think Valentines is the one holiday women are safe if they don't get anything for their man. But if men forget to get something for their woman - watch out! The gloves are off and hair is flyin'.

I still think that the major holidays, excluding Christmas, Thanksgiving, and the Fourth of July, are kept around so that the economy can make some money. Stores plan their sales around these holidays. Hell they even plan their stores around these holidays. As soon as one holiday display goes down the next one's going up. "Support your economy - buy holiday stuff that you won't ever use again."

Why do we celebrate these holidays? It's tradition that's why.

In this Special Edition of the Mat-Su Monitor I have looked into the history, and some common beliefs and customs exercised around the world. I included a few gift ideas for you men out there, as well as some places to shop online so you don't have to leave the house. That's right, you can still watch the game and do your valentine shopping. Ain't life grand. Don't worry ladies I provided you with some gift ideas, and the URL's to the same wonderful online shops. I included some romantic stories, and top ten "OOPS" done on Valentines Day by both men and women.

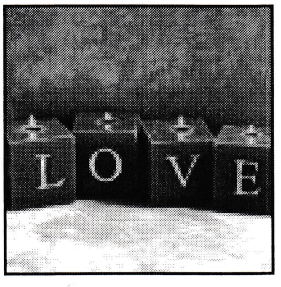
Don't foget that Februaury 13 - 19 is the International flirting week. So it's ok to flirt, not that it wasn't before. Enjoy!

Gift Ideas

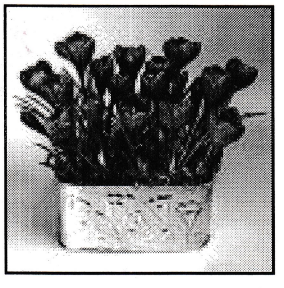
For those of you who are struggling to find that perfect gift for your Valentine, below are a few ideas. These were taken from the website www.lovingyou.com, with their permission of course. To find more gift ideas, or to order these gifts securely online, visit them today. On the back page is some more URL's to gift shops online.

Candy

Gifts



Flowers



Teddy Bear

The History of Valentine's Day

Saint Valentine's Day, a holiday honoring lovers, celebrated February 14. Greeting cards, known as valentines, are often designed with hearts to symbolize love. The festival gradually became associated with the feast day (February 14) of two Roman martyrs, both named Saint Valentine, who lived in the 3rd century.

provided by Valentine Be Mine

The first interpretation has this celebration originating as a pagan tradition in the third century. During this time hordes of hungry wolves roamed outside of Rome where shepherds kept their flocks. The God Lupercus was said to watch over the shepherds and their flocks and keep them from the wolves. Every February the Romans celebrated a feast called Lupercalia to honor Lupercus so that no harm would come to the shepherds and their flocks. Also during Lupercalia, but in honor of the goddess Juno Februata, the names of young women were put into a box and names were drawn by lot. The boys and girls who were matched would be considered partners for the year, which began in March. This celebration continued long after wolves were a problem to Rome.

As Christianity became prevalent, priests attempted to replace old heathen practices. To Christianize the ancient pagan celebration of the Feast of Lubercus, the church officials changed the name to St. Valentine's Day. To give the celebration further meaning and eliminate pagan traditions, priests substituted the drawing of Saints' names for the names of the girls. On St. Valentine's Day the priest placed saints' names into an urn or box. The young people then drew a name from the container. In the following year, the youth was supposed to emulate the life of the saint whose name he had drawn.

By the fourteenth century they reverted back to the use of girls' names. In the sixteenth century they once again tried to have saintly valentines but it was as unsuccessful as the first attempt.

While it can't be proved historically, there were seven men named Valentine who were honored with feasts on February 14th. Of these men, two stories link incidents that could have given our present day meaning to St. Valentine's Day.

One of these men named Valentine was a priest during the reign of Emperor Claudius. Valentine was revered by the young and old, rich and poor, with people of all walks of life attending his services. At this time Emperor Claudius was heavily recruiting men to serve as soldiers for his wars without much success. The men preferred not to leave their wives, families and sweethearts to fight in foreign lands. Claudius became angry and declared that no more marriages could be performed and all engagements were cancelled.

Valentine thought this to be unfair and secretly married several couples. When Claudius found out, he threw

History continued on page 9

Beliefs and Customs throughout the Ages

Provided by Alanna Webb of lovestories.com
www.lovestories.com

Old English superstition: It was considered bad luck to bring snowdrops into the house before February 14th if any unmarried girls in the home hoped to be married that year.

A Young girls wrote their boyfriend's names on bits of paper, rolled each name in clay, dropped the clay in water. The first scrap of paper to rise would have the name of her true valentine.

Unmarried girls pinned five bay leaves to their pillows on the eve before Valentine's Day, one leaf to the center, and one to each corner. They believed that they would see their future husband in their dreams.

Derbyshire, England: Young women circled the church 12 times at midnight, repeating the chant, "I sow hempseed, hempseed I sow, he that loves me best, come after me now." Their true valentine was then supposed to appear.

Young ladies would rise early on Valentine's Day, and look through their keyholes, hoping to see two objects. If they only saw one object on their first peep, they believed there was little chance to marry that year.

Young ladies would write their names on slips of paper, and at a Valentine's Day party, young men would draw names. A young man would wear the name of his lady on his sleeve for days to claim her as his valentine, originating the saying "wearing your heart on your sleeve."

In England, a suitor would leave a basket of gifts on his beloved's doorstep and run off.

In Italy, young ladies would awaken before sunrise and watch out their window for the first man they could see. This would either be the man they married or look like him.

In Denmark, a man would send a woman a Valentine gaekkebrev, or "joking letter", that contains a rhyme and signed with a series of dots to represent his name. If the woman guesses his identity correctly and notifies him on Valentine's Day, he would reward her with an Easter egg on the next Easter.

"Some women blush when they are kissed, some call for the police, some swear, some bite. But the worst are those who laugh."

William Raye

A young girl would write her boyfriends' names on bits of paper, roll each name in clay, and drop the clay in water.

"If music be the food of love, play on."

From Shakespeare's Twelveth Night

European Valentine

provided by Valentine Be Mine

A young Frenchman, Charles, Duke of Orleans, was one of the earliest creators of valentines, called "poetical or amorous addresses." From his confinement in the Tower of London after the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, he sent several poems or rhymed love letters or "valentines" to his wife in France.

During the fifteenth century, one valentine showed a drawing of a knight and a lady, with Cupid in the act of sending an arrow to pierce the knight's heart.

During the seventeenth century people made their own valentines using original verse or poems copied from booklets with appropriate verse.

The English attitude toward St. Valentine's Day in the middle of the eighteenth century is summed up in this verse printed in Poor Robin's Almanac in 1757:

This month bright Phoebus enters Pisces,
The maids will have good store of kisses,
For always when the fun comes there,
Valentine's Day is drawing near,
And both the men and maids incline
To chuse them each a Valentine;
And if a man gets one he loves,
He gives her first a pair of gloves;
And, by the way, remember this,
To seal the favour with a kiss.

This kiss begets more love, and then
That love begets a kiss again,
Until this trade the man doth catch,
And then he doth propose the match,
The woman's willing, tho' she's shy,
She gives the man this soft reply,
"I'll not resolve one thing or other,
Until I first consult my mother."
When she says so, 'tis half a grant,
And may be taken for consent.

The first commercial valentine appeared circa 1800 and were rather simplistic. But by the 1830's and 1840's Valentines contained delicate and artistic messages. Valentines made of fine papers and decorated with satin, ribbon, or lace commanded high prices. They had pictures of turtledoves, lovers' knots in gold or silver, bow and arrows, cupids, and bleeding hearts. All of these symbols have become associated with love and lovers.

In the 1840's the first mechanical valentines were introduced. By pulling a tab, a figure or object on the card could be made to move. Some had elaborate honeycomb pop-outs or various other three-dimensional features.

American Valentines

provided by Valentine Be Mine

Valentine Writers.

After 1723, American valentines began to grow with the import from England of valentine "writers." A writer was a booklet containing a vast array of verses and messages which could be copied onto gilt-edged letter paper or other decorative sheets. One popular writer contained not only "be my valentine" type verses for men to send, but also acceptance or "answers" which women could return. Here is an example:

Valentine

A short time since I danc'd with you,
And from that hour lov'd you true;
Your pleasing form, your charming air,
Might with a fabl'd grace compare;
Your accents, so melodious sweet,
Still on my ear does seem to beat;
And 'tis the first wish of my life,
To win my Delia for a wife;
Deign, my sweet maid, a line to send,
And may love's saint my plea defend.

Answer

Your Valentine is very kind,
Nor did a cool reception find;
Your company gave me delight,
When I danced with you t'other night;
Then mutually we did incline,
Our hearts to love, my Valentine.

From then on, Valentines became less artistic and overornamented. During the Gay Nineties they were adorned with garish spun glass, mother-of-pearl, imitation jewels, or silk fringe. Proof of the less attractive, cheap-looking valentine is seen in the "vinegar valentine." John McLaughlin, a New York printer, created these comic valentines that were printed on cheap paper in crude colors. His messages made fun of old maids, teachers, and others. Comic designs done in 1870 by the American cartoonist Charles Howard were called "penny dreadfuls"--a perfect name for them because they sold for a penny and the designs were dreadful.

The first U.S. made valentines were crafted by a Mount Holyoke College student, Miss Esther Howland. Her father, a stationer in Worcester, MA, imported valentines every year from England. Esther, however, decided to

American Valentine continued on page 9

"Love is like an hourglass with the heart filling up as the brain empties."

Jules Renard

Top 10 Mistakes Men Make On Valentine's Day

By Alanna Webb of lovestories.com
www.lovestories.com

~10~
Send flowers with the wrong woman's name on the card.

~9~
Ask if you want to exchange gifts. Is that romantic?

~8~
Break up before so you don't have to buy anything.

~7~
Buy useful gifts like extension cords instead of romantic.

~6~
Grumble and complain that the holiday is a lot of hype.

~5~
Don't realize how wonderful it is for a woman to get roses!

~4~
Buy expensive gifts rather than spending time and effort to get a woman what she really wants.

~3~
Don't plan anything ahead of time, so it's impossible to get reservations.

~2~
Make no effort to be romantic to celebrate the day together.

~1~
Forget it totally... ignore it is a better word!!!

Technically, you need "cele" on the top line not a biggie

Top 10 Mistakes Women Make On Valentine's Day

By Alanna Webb of lovestories.com
www.lovestories.com

~10~
Getting married on Valentine's Day.

~9~
Hinting too much, making the man feel obligated.

~8~
Don't go to any efforts to help plan a romantic day.

~7~
Expect men to read their minds on what they want.

~6~
Think that all a man wants is sex.

~5~
Don't reciprocate with romantic gifts.

~4~
Aren't in the mood for romance.

~3~
Underappreciate the man's efforts.

~2~
Expect too much.

~1~
Expect Romeo when they have acted like Roseanne all year!

Some Romance

provided by lovingyou.com

What Valentine periodical would be complete without the romantic stories? Some here are a two stories provided by the romantic website lovingyou.com. To read more stories that make you go "Ohhhhh, that is so sweet!" visit thier site at www.lovingyou.com
The other story is on page 5 - "A Loss can be a Gain."

Cracker Jacks

by Amy

I met my boyfriend through a bunch of friends of mine that are roommates with him.

It was pretty much love at first site, and after that first date, you couldn't keep us apart. Well, we talked about marriage a few times, but never really "talked" about it.

I finally decided that one of us needed to make the move. I wanted it to be romantic and special. I thought about it for months. I finally decided that I would do it on Christmas.

I was going to his house for a lil' get together with his three other roommates and their girlfriends and my best friend. I had bought everyone presents and they all had to open them downstairs in the living room in front of everyone.

I had made sure everyone's present ran me over $50.00 so I looked like I had spent a lot of money on everyone and everyone expected me to buy my boyfriend something really expensive.

Well, to their surprise, when he opened his Christmas present it turned out to be a box of Cracker Jacks. Everyone looked sooooo surprised and he looked a lil' hurt.

I didn't change my facial expression, and finally someone asked if they could have some of his Cracker Jacks.

He said sure and opened the box. Another one of my friends said, "Hey! Aren't those things supposed to have

Cracker Jacks continued on page 8

"Do not tell me,

for I've heard it

all, there is too

much to do with

hate, but much

more to do with

love."

William Shakespeare in his Romeo and Juliet

Cracker Jacks continued from page 7
prizes in 'em?"

My boyfriend started looking for it, like I knew he would. When he found it, he gasped. It was a ring with the words, I love you, engraved on the outside of it.

The note attached asked him if he would marry me. Of course he said yes. Now, we're happily planning on getting married in a few years.

Our friends still talk about how romantic and surprising it was. I was so proud of my creativity! Now, I'm with the man of my dreams!

A Loss Can Be A Gain

by Jaclyn Ann Cady

I was devastated when my first and only love Jamie broke up with me in September. I didn't know how to deal with it. We had been engaged for two months and lived together, he was everything to me.

Afterwards, I decided it would be good for me to get out of the town where we lived and in January, I made the big move eight hundred miles away.

Jamie and I had been trying to be firends, but all the love, and the anger always got in the way. I came down here to go to school, and found it incredibly hard to want to date anyone else.

In March, I decided to go to spring break and see him. This, I thought, would be it. One final fling and then I'll let go. And boy did I ever.

The first day I was there we cleared things up, we weren't ever going to get back together and that was that. I was heart-broken, here I thought he was going to come crawling back to me, and he was letting me go.

Then I met Scott. He is a friend of Jamie's that I had never met before from the place where I first lived. Scott and I hit it off right away and things were great from then on between us. When I left to go back to school, I didn't cry when Jamie left me at the airport, and I didn't even get that weird feeling you get when someone you love walks into the room. I got back to school that same day and Scott called me.

Since that day, it's been about a month now, we've talked and come to love each other in a way we've both never loved anyone before. I thank God every day that I took that one last chance to try to get back what I thought was the love of my life. Instead I let one love go, and found another that is going to last forever.

History continued from page 2

Valentine in prison where he died. Friends of the priest retrieved his body and buried it in a churchyard in Rome.

Another version had St. Valentine jailed for helping Christians. While Valentine was in prison he cured a jailer's daughter of blindness. Claudius became enraged and had Valentine clubbed and beheaded on February 14, 269 A.D.

Yet another story claims that Valentine fell in love with the jailer's daughter and wrote her letters that were signed "From your Valentine."

All of the seven Valentines eventually evolved into one. In 496 Pope Gelasius declared the day in honor of St. Valentine. Through the centuries the Christian holiday became a time to exchange love messages and St. Valentine became the patron saint of lovers. Lovers' quarrels come under his jurisdiction and, naturally, he is the patron saint of engaged couples and of anyone wishing to marry.

American Valentine continued from page 5

create her own valentine messages. Around 1830 she began importing lace, fine papers, and other supplies for her valentines. She employed several assistants and her brothers helped market her "Worcester" valentines. As one of our first successful U.S. career women her sales amounted to about a ~~hundred thousand dollars~~ $100,000 annually--not bad for the 1830's.

In our century we've seen a change from the heavy sentimentality of earlier days to what can best be described as a light touch. Nowadays a valentine usually accompanies a more elaborate gift of candy, flowers, perfume, etc.

American school children usually celebrate St. Valentine's Day with a party at school. Prior to the party the children make a decorated box with a slot in the top. During the party the children distribute valentines to their classmates' Valentine's Box.

Valentine cards are manufactured on an enormous scale today that range from the sentimental to sophisticated to humous valentines. There is a valentine for everyone--sweetheart, spouse, children, parents, teacher and even your pet! In terms of the number of greeting cards sent, Valentine's Day ranks second only to Christmas.

ZALES
JEWELERS

Now offering **10% off** for students!
Located in the Cottonwood Creek Mall

Headquarters
Custom Designs

Now offering **10% off** for students!
Located in the Cottonwood Creek Mall

More sites for gift ideas

1. www.lovingyou.com
2. www.amazon.com
3. www.me2u.com
4. www.msn.com

"Love is like a but terfly, it settles upon you when you least expect it."

Submitted by Lauren Smith